BOOK ONE OF FOUR

MARVELS™

MARVEL COMICS

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THERE WAS *FIRE* IN '39. EVEN *I* COULD FEEL IT.

I WAS NOTHING BUT A *SCRAPPY BROOKLYN KID,* STILL WET BEHIND THE EARS --

SKATCH

-- BUT WE WERE A *SCRAPPY COUNTRY* BACK THEN. WE'D KAYOED THE *GREAT DEPRESSION,* AND THE BLAZE IN *EUROPE* DIDN'T SCARE US --

...YOU *BELIEVE* THAT *HITLER* AND HIS "READINESS FOR PEACE" BUNK?

YEAH -- WHILE HE'S POURIN' *CRACK TROOPS* INTO THE RHINELAND!

HOW SOON YOU FIGURE BEFORE *WE'RE* IN IT?

ASK SENATOR *TOBEY* -- ONCE *FDR* FINISHES CHEWIN' HIM UP!

-- OUR FIRE WAS *HOTTER,* AND WE WERE READY TO *PROVE* IT.

THEY'RE GOING TO *NEED* GOOD PHOTOG-RAPHERS OVER THERE -- AND *I'M GOOD!*

THE NAME *PHIL SHELDON* MAY MEAN NOTHING *NOW* --

-- BUT YOU JUST WAIT AND *SEE!* EUROPE'S WHERE THINGS ARE *JUMPING!*

WHERE *CAREERS* ARE BEING MADE!

YEAH -- AND WHERE PEOPLE ARE DYING BY THE *CARLOAD.*

ME. I'M NOT TIRED OF SORDID OLD *NEW YORK* YET.

I DON'T THINK I EVER *WILL* BE!

BUT TO EACH HIS OWN. WHEN *I* RUN THE BUGLE --

HERE WE *GO* AGAIN ...

AS I WAS *SAYING,* WHEN *I* RUN THE BUGLE. YOU CAN HEAD THE FOREIGN BUREAU. *MAYBE.* IF I STILL *FEEL* LIKE IT.

FOR NOW, THOUGH --

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-- WE'RE JUST *WORKING STIFFS.* AND WE TAKE THE JOBS WE GET HANDED.

OF COURSE, *SOME* JOBS ARE BETTER THAN *OTHERS* -- !

AND ON THAT NOTE, I'LL SEE YOU BIRDS LATER. GOT A JUICY *LABOR DISPUTE* TO COVER.

THANKS FOR THE RIDE --

-- AND HAVE FUN WITH YOUR *CRACKPOT!*

RUB IT *IN,* WHY DON'T YOU?

GO FRY YOUR *HAT,* PAL!

THE NERVE A SOME PEOPLE -- !

I KEPT AN EYE OUT FOR *PHOTO POSSIBILITES,* BUT DIDN'T EXPECT ANY.

PHINEAS T. HORTON WAS ONE OF *THOSE* SCIENTISTS -- HIS *TAMER* THEORIES MADE EINSTEIN'S SEEM LIKE RECIPES FOR *CHICKEN SOUP.*

WELCOME, GENTLEMEN. I'M GLAD SO MANY OF YOU COULD COME.

BUT THEN, IT WAS A *SLOW NEWS DAY...*

HE SPOUTED SOME *DIME-NOVEL* RUBBISH ABOUT SOME *SYNTHETIC MAN* HE WAS HAVING TROUBLE WITH --

I THOUGHT ABOUT EUROPE AND DIDN'T PAY *ATTENTION* --

-- UNTIL --

I'LL ALLOW SOME *OXYGEN* TO ENTER THE CHAMBER --

-- AND YOU'LL SEE --

-- WHY I CALL HIM --

G-GOOD LORD!

The HUMAN TORCH!

THE SUDDEN JOLT OF *SHOCK* AND *TERROR* ROCKED US BACK LIKE A PHYSICAL BLOW. BUT IT ONLY LASTED A MOMENT.

THEN COMMON SENSE REASSERTED ITSELF. THE THING WAS A FAKE -- IT *HAD* TO BE!

CHECK YOUR CALENDAR, HORTON -- HALLOWEEN'S NOT FOR *WEEKS* YET!

WHAT'D YOU DO -- DOUSE A MANNEQUIN IN *KEROSENE?*

PAFF

WE SHOULDA BROUGHT *MARSHMALLOWS!*

*I'D HAVE SCOFFED, TOO -- BUT I WAS DOING MY **JOB**, THINKING A PICTURE MIGHT MAKE THE **BACK PAGES** SOMEWHERE...*

*...SO I WAS THE ONLY ONE LOOKING DIRECTLY **AT** THE THING --*

-- WHEN --

IT -- MOVED --?

*IT LOOKED ALIVE -- AS **HUMAN** AS YOU OR I --*

*BUT IT WAS **ON FIRE.** AND I SWEAR --*

-- IT LOOKED STRAIGHT AT ME.

YOU WANT YOUR ***NAME*** IN THE PAPER, HORTON? YOU'LL ***GET*** IT -- BUT NOT THE WAY YOU ***HOPED!***

BUT, GENTLE-MEN --

THAT THING IS A DANGER TO THE ***WHOLE CITY!*** DESTROY IT -- OR WE'LL ***FORCE YOU*** TO!

*I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO **SAY** ON THE WAY TO THE CARS.*

*I DON'T THINK **ANYONE** DID.*

BUT WE KNEW OUR ***JOBS...***

WUXTRY! WUXTRY! READ ALL ABOUT BLAZING MAN OF FIRE!

Daily Bugle 5¢

FIRE-MAN

BLAZING FREAK OF SCIENCE FEVER

'Human Torch' a Menace, Says Asten

*I COULDN'T HELP FEELING A LITTLE **SORRY** FOR HORTON.*

*THAT -- **THING** -- IT LOOKED AT ME. LIKE A **PERSON** WOULD. WHAT MUST IT HAVE BEEN LIKE -- TO **DESTROY** IT?*

*I HEARD LATER HE ENDED UP **BURYING IT.***

*POWER OF THE **PRESS.***

BUT THE WEEKS PASSED, AND THERE WERE *OTHER* KINDS OF FIRE.

WHAT DO YOU *THINK*, SWEETHEART? THE ONES IN THE BLUE BOX?

THERE WAS WORK AND LIFE AND THE *CITY BY NIGHT* --

-- AND IN MY CASE, THERE WAS *DORIS JACQUET*...

THEY'RE AWFUL PRICEY. I LOVE YOU -- BUT I DON'T WANT TO *BREAK YOU*...

LET'S *DO* IT, DORIS! LET'S TAKE THE RISK!

I CAN SEE IT ALL, DORIS! I'LL MAKE IT TO EUROPE -- MAKE A *NAME* FOR MYSELF! I'LL BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU ALL YOU DESERVE --

-- THE LITTLE HOUSE IN QUEENS -- THE WHITE PICKET FENCE -- *THE WORKS!*

SOUNDS GREAT -- BUT I'D SETTLE FOR JUST *YOU*, SAFE AND ALIVE!

THERE WAS NO NEED FOR HER TO WORRY ABOUT THAT. I WAS *IMMORTAL*. WE ALL WERE, BACK THEN.

EEEEEK

THAT SCREAM !?!

THERE WASN'T ANY *REAL DANGER* --

THIS MIGHT BE IT -- THE SCOOP THAT'LL CONVINCE MISTER GOODMAN TO SEND ME TO *EUROPE!*

-- JUST *OPPORTUNITY.*

WH-WHAT *IS* IT?!

STAY *AWAY!* CHARLIE -- MAKE IT *STAY AWAY!*

P-P-*PLEASE* -- !

WAIT HERE, HONEY -- WHERE IT'S *SAFE!* I'LL BE *RIGHT BACK!*

BUT WHEN I ROUNDED THE *CORNER* --

N-NO!

IT WAS CLEAR IN THEIR FACES: THEY'D *SEEN* THE STORIES IN THE PAPER -- *CHUCKLED* OVER THEM AS THEY ATE THEIR EGGS AND BACON.

BUT NOW THOSE FACES TOLD A *DIFFERENT* STORY -- A STORY OF FEAR AND AWE, AND A WORLD *CUT LOOSE* FROM ITS *MOORINGS.*

OF COURSE. I WASN'T WATCHING *THEM.*

PAFF

AND JUST AS I WAS WONDERING HOW THE TORCH ESCAPED, AND THINKING THAT ***HE*** LOOKED AS SUR-PRISED AND CONFUSED AS ***WE*** DID --

-- AND AT THE SAME TIME TELLING MYSELF THAT WAS RIDICULOUS -- THAT HE -- THAT *IT*-- WAS AN OBJECT, NOT A PERSON --

-- HE WAS GONE --

-- LEAVING BEHIND NOTHING BUT ***FLAMING FOOTPRINTS*** THAT FLICKERED AND DIED IN THE CHILL NIGHT AIR.

I -- I MUST BE ***SEEIN'*** THINGS!

IT WAS A -- A TRICK OF THE ***LIGHT!***

YEAH!

PHIL --

TOO MUCH ***BUBBLY!***

WHAT ***WAS*** IT?! I SAW SOMETHING IN THE ***SKY*** -- !

PROPAGANDA -- SOME KIND OF ***GERMAN TRICK!***

THEY COULDN'T COMPRE-HEND WHAT THEY'D SEEN -- SO THEY DISMISSED IT. IT WAS OVER --

-- THEY COULD ***SHAKE IT OFF*** NOW.

BUT I'D SEEN IT TWICE --

-- SO WHILE THE REST OF NEW YORK WENT BACK TO **BUSINESS**, DANCING TO JIMMY DORSEY AND WATCHING THE WAR IN **EUROPE** LIKE A BALL GAME --

-- I WAITED FOR THE OTHER SHOE TO DROP.

PHIL!

PHIL! Oh, **PHIL** -- THANK GOD YOU'RE **HERE!**

WHAT IS IT, DORIS --

--WHAT'S HAPPENED?!

IT WAS **SO** -- IT WAS --

STEADY, SWEETHEART -- TAKE A DEEP BREATH!

I WAS ON MY **LUNCH BREAK** -- I TOOK MY SANDWICH TO THE WATERFRONT -- LIKE I USUALLY DO --

"-- BUT THERE WAS THIS **MAN**, PHIL! THIS BIG, EERIE-LOOKING **NAKED MAN!** HE HAD A BANDAGED GIRL -- THE POLICE SAID HE KIDNAPPED HER FROM THE HOSPITAL!

"THE POLICE -- THEY **SHOT** HIM! BUT PHIL --

"-- THE BULLETS DIDN'T HURT HIM AT ALL!

"HE PICKED UP A *POLICE CAR* --

"-- AND *THREW* IT! HE *THREW THE CAR!*

"HE LEAPED INTO THE WATER -- AND LOOKED BACK AT THE COPS LIKE THEY WERE JUST A *NUISANCE* TO HIM! "

THE POLICE -- THEY SAVED THE GIRL -- BUT THE NAKED MAN JUST SWAM AWAY --

-- WITHOUT *EVER* COMING UP FOR AIR!

AW, *CRIMINY!* I BEEN HEARIN' THIS "SUB-MAREENER" STORY ALL MORNIN' --

-- HE BUSTED UP A POWER PLANT -- WENT FLYIN' OVER CENTRAL PARK -- IT'S ALL A LOAD O' *HOOEY!*

IT'S ONE O' THEM *ORSON WELLES TRICKS* -- A BUNCH O' BUNK ONLY *SUCKERS'D* BELIEVE!

YEAH!

BUT -- I WAS *THERE!* I -- I *SAW* IT!

JUST A TRICK, LITTLE LADY.

PHIL ?

IT'S OKAY, SWEETHEART. YOU SAW WHAT YOU SAW.

*THEY ALL AGREED THAT SHE WAS WRONG AND IT WAS **NOTHING**, AND I WONDERED HOW **LONG** THEY COULD KEEP IT UP.*

*NOT **THAT** LONG, AS IT TURNED OUT.*

MANHATTAN SEEMED LIKE THE *WHOLE WORLD* TO US SOMETIMES, BUT IT WAS AN ISLAND --

-- AND THE MARVELS AMONG US DIDN'T EXACTLY *HIDE.*

--MELTED THAT *POOR MAN'S* CAR --

-- CAUGHT A *DANGEROUS MANIAC,* THEY SAY! A GANG OF HOODLUMS IN SPECIAL *FLAMING SUITS* --

-- AND WHERE'D THEY GET *THAT* IDEA, THEN --

-- NOT NATURAL --

-- THAT HORRIFYING FACE -

-- STOPPED THAT *RACING SCAM* A FEW WEEKS BACK --

- JUST WHAT HE *WANTS* YOU TO THINK --

-- WHOLE *SUBWAY TUNNEL* WAS FLOODING --

-- WOULD HAVE DROWNED FOR SURE --

-- SAVED *US ALL* --

-- WHO'S TO SAY HE DIDN'T *START* THE FLOOD IN THE FIRST PLACE --

- RIPPED RIGHT THROUGH *STEEL!* SHIFTED TONS OF *METAL AND GLASS* -- AND DO WE JUST SAY *THANK YOU* TO --

-- DON'T LIKE THOSE EARS *AT ALL* --

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

AND WHEN YOU CAME RIGHT DOWN TO IT, THE ISLAND WASN'T *THAT BIG.*

LOOK AT THIS STORY! "HUMAN TORCH FLIES MEDICINE TO TRAPPED TOWN!" *Pfah!*

NOW, NOW -- WHERE'S THAT EASY WIT OF YOURS? THAT CHEERFUL CONTEMPT FOR THE WORLD AND EVERYTHING IN IT?

THE THINGS THESE FREAKS ***DO*** -- MAKING JOES LIKE YOU AND ME LOOK LIKE ***PIKERS*** -- AND WE JUST ***LAP IT UP!***

I'D LIKE TO ***LOCK 'EM UP*** AND THROW AWAY THE ***KEY!***

THAT'S --

-- ***ENOUGH!***

NOT THAT BIG AT ALL.

FOOD HERE'S ***LOUSY*** ANYWAY.

IT WAS AROUND THEN THAT I FINALLY GOT MY CHANCE TO GO TO *EUROPE.* BUT...

YOU'RE TURNING IT *DOWN?*

PHIL -- YOU'VE BEEN BEGGING FOR THIS FOR *MONTHS!*

I *KNOW,* MISTER GOODMAN, AND I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT. I'D JUST... RATHER *STAY,* FOR NOW.

Daily Bugle

SUB-MARINER ESCAPES DEATH IN ELECTRIC CHAIR!

NOTORIOUS FIGURE IN DARING PRISON ESCAPE

HAZE DRIVEN FROM BURGEN, THUNDERM

ELECTRO, MARVEL OF THE AGE, UNMASKS DRUG RING

WHAT COULD I SAY? THAT THE CITY HAD *CHANGED* SOMEHOW. AND THINGS JUST DIDN'T SEEM *RIGHT* ANYMORE?

I'M SORRY.

STILL, THAT'S HOW I FELT.

IT'S NOT LIKE THERE HADN'T BEEN MYSTERY-MEN *BEFORE* -- THE *ANGEL,* THE *PHANTOM EAGLE* -- EVEN AS FAR BACK AS THE *RAWHIDE KID* --

-- BUT THIS WAS *DIFFERENT.* THESE NEW CREATURES - THEY WERE *MORE THAN HUMAN.*

AND WITH DORIS AND HER MOTHER ALL A-TWITTER OVER *WEDDING PLANS* --

WHAT DO YOU THINK, PHIL? PINK -- OR MAUVE?

Ah... WHATEVER. THEY'RE BOTH FINE.

PHIL -- IS SOMETHING *WRONG?* YOU'VE BEEN JUMPY AS A CAT ALL EVENING.

IT'S NOTHING. I'M FINE.

I'M GOING OUT FOR A *SMOKE.*

HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO BE A HUSBAND -- MAYBE A FATHER --

-- IN A WORLD WHERE ANY MOMENT A *MONSTER* COULD COME CRASHING THROUGH YOUR WALL?

MARVELS, I CALLED THEM -- AND THAT'S WHAT THEY WERE. NEXT TO THAT -- WHAT WERE WE?

BEFORE THEY CAME, WE WERE SO BIG, SO GRAND. WE WERE AMERICANS -- YOUNG, STRONG, VITAL!

WE WERE THE ONES WHO GOT THINGS DONE.

BUT WE'D GOTTEN SMALLER. I COULD SEE IT IN THOSE SAME FACES --

-- FACES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN SO CONFIDENT, SO BRASH.

WE WEREN'T THE PLAYERS ANYMORE. WE WERE SPECTATORS.

WE WERE WAITING FOR SOMETHING -- WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT WAS --

-- AND IN THE LATE SPRING OF 1940 --

FELLAS! MISTER GOODMAN WANTS ALL OF YOU IN HIS OFFICE -- PRONTO!

YOU AIN'T GONNA BELIEVE WHAT'S HAPPENED!

-- THE WAITING STOPPED.

THE SUB-MARINER WAS *PITCHING A FIT* AND TAKING IT OUT ON THE CITY -- AND THE CHIEF OF POLICE SICCED THE *HUMAN TORCH* ON HIM.

IT WAS AS IF THE *GODS OF LEGEND* HAD RETURNED TO EARTH -- AT LEAST, IF YOU READ ABOUT IT IN THE *PAPERS*, THAT IS.

TO FOLLOW THE MARVELS THROUGH THEIR COMBAT, AS THE SUB-MARINER BOLTED FROM LANDMARK TO LANDMARK SOWING *DESTRUCTION*, THE TORCH A *STREAK OF FIRE* ON HIS TAIL --

-- IT MUST HAVE SEEMED LIKE A GLORIOUS *AERIAL BALLET*. DANGEROUS, BEAUTIFUL AND *THRILLING*.

AND MAYBE IT WAS.

BUT NOT FOR *US*.

WHAT WE SAW WAS *CARNAGE* AND *DESTRUCTION* AND *CONFUSION* --

THIRD AVENUE

CRIPES! LOOK AT THE *EL!*

WHICH WAY, KID?

TH- THAT WAY -- TOWARD THE *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING!*

-- AND *FRIGHTENED PEOPLE* WHO FELT SAFE A MINUTE OR TWO AGO, TRYING TO GET OUT OF THE WAY BUT NOT SURE WHICH WAY TO *RUN*.

I'VE GOTTA GET TO A *PHONE*...

WE BARELY EVEN SAW ANY OF THE *ACTION*, IT MOVED SO FAST...

LOOK! THERE HE *GOES!*

I'M NO FAN OF THAT GUY -- I DON'T HOLD WITH PEOPLE *BUILT FROM A KIT* --

BUT RIGHT HERE AN' NOW, I HOPE HE GIVES THAT WATER-BREATHING JERK *WHAT FOR!*

DON'T SAY THAT! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING ABOUT!*

Huh?

AND YOU ARE -- ?

BETTY DEAN, POLICEWOMAN. I'VE *MET* NAMOR -- HE'S ONLY TRYING TO GET WHAT HE CONSIDERS JUSTICE FOR HIS PEOPLE!

YOU SHOULDN'T JUDGE HIM UNTIL YOU KNOW *BOTH SIDES* OF THE STORY!

"PEOPLE?" THERE'S MORE THAN *ONE* OF HIM?

HEY! DIDJA *HEAR?* THAT SUB-MARINER GUY JUST FLOODED THE HOLLAND TUNNEL -- *AN' IT'S FULLA CARS!*

I'VE *GOT* TO GET TO A PHONE...

YOU'LL HAVE TO *EXCUSE* US, OFFICER DEAN --

-- MUCH AS WE'D LOVE TO LISTEN TO YOU MAKE EXCUSES FOR A *RAMPAGING MANIAC* -- WE HAVE *WORK* TO DO.

*WE DIDN'T CATCH UP TO EITHER OF THEM AT THE TUNNEL -- **OR** THE CENTRAL PARK ZOO -- **OR** THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE.*

IT WASN'T UNTIL THEY REACHED THE STATUE OF LIBERTY THAT WE GOT MORE THAN A GLIMPSE OF THEM --

SEE -- *THERE!* UP ON THE *STATUE!*

-- AND AT THAT, IT WAS FROM QUITE A DISTANCE...

THE SUB-MARINER'S BLOWN OUT THE TORCH'S *FIRE* SOMEHOW -- AND HE'S *THROWIN' HIM OFF!*

WE HELD OUR BREATH AS THE TORCH BURST INTO FLAME AGAIN --

-- BUT --

TOO LATE - HE HIT THE DRINK! AND LOOK! THAT FISH-FACED RAT'S DIVIN' IN *AFTER* HIM!

SAY, CAN ROBOTS *DROWN?*

THE TORCH'S ESCAPE. SOME MINUTES LATER. WAS HIDDEN FROM US BY A COAL BARGE. SO WE MISSED THAT TOO --

-- BUT AT LEAST I FINALLY REACHED A PHONE...

YOU'RE *ALL RIGHT*, DORIS? NOTHING'S --

NO -- THERE WAS SOME NOISE AND THE BUILDING SHOOK. BUT THAT'S ALL.

IT'S *YOU* I'M WORRIED ABOUT -- OUT THERE IN ALL THAT --

LOOK -- GET TO *LANIGAN'S* AND WAIT FOR ME THERE. THERE'LL BE NEWSMEN THERE -- SO IF ANY-THING HAPPENS, YOU'LL KNOW RIGHT AWAY.

AND THE BUILDING'S *SOLID AS A ROCK* -- !

PHIL! KISS'ER FOR ME AND HANG UP! WE'RE GOIN' TO *RADIO CITY!*

WHAT -- HE'S KIDNAPPING *ROCKETTES* NOW?

WE HAVE TELE-

WHOLE *TELEVISION STUDIO.* TAKE A GANDER.

THIS IS PRINCE NAMOR. THE SUB-MARINER -- WITH A MESSAGE FOR THE SO-CALLED *HUMAN TORCH!*

THIS IS MY *FINAL WARNING!* GET OFF MY TRAIL, TORCH --

-- OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!

OF COURSE. ALL WE FOUND AT RADIO CITY WAS SCARED EMPLOYEES. WRECKED EQUIPMENT AND HOLES IN THE WALLS.

THE TORCH AND THE SUB-MARINER HAD HOT-FOOTED IT UPSTATE, AND THE ROADS WERE TOO JAMMED WITH PANICKED NEW YORKERS TO FOLLOW --

SO WHILE THEY *WHEELED* AND *SOARED* AND *CLASHED* IN THE SPRING SUNSHINE --

-- WE KEPT TO THE SHADOWS AND STRAINED FOR *ANY WORD* OF THEM.

CAN'T YOU GET ANY BETTER RECEPTION THAN *THAT*, LANIGAN?

SHH!

-- REPEAT THE *LATEST DEVELOPMENTS:* THE HUMAN TORCH HAD IMPRISONED THE SUB-MARINER BENEATH A *SHEET OF FLAME* IN AN UPSTATE RESERVOIR --

-- BUT THE UNDERSEA DYNAMO FREED HIMSELF -- EVEN AS THE ARMY *BOMBED* HIS FIERY PRISON!

WE WILL CONTINUE TO BRING YOU UPDATES AS THEY OCCUR. BUT NOW A WORD FROM --

BLAST THEM!

WHAT IS IT, PHIL? WHAT'S WRONG?

LOOK AT US -- JUST *SITTING HERE,* WAITING! THERE ISN'T A *THING* WE CAN DO --

-- AND THIS IS *OUR* CITY! *OUR WORLD!*

WHO GAVE *THEM* THE RIGHT TO JUST COME IN AND *TAKE IT AWAY* FROM US?!

LOOK *ALIVE*, KIDS! POLICE POOL SAYS THE TORCH IS BACK IN TOWN -- AND HEADED FOR THE *TORPEY CHEMICAL WORKS!*

HE'S UP TO SOMETHING, ALL RIGHT!

LET'S *MOVE!*

*AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, THE POLICE HAD CLEARED THE BRIDGES BY THEN. AND OUR **PRESS CREDENTIALS** GOT US THROUGH...*

BOY, PHIL -- I'VE GOT TO HAND IT TO YOU. YOU'RE ONE *SMART GUY!*

Huh?

IF YOU'D TAKEN THAT JOB, YOU'D BE ON A STEAMER TO EUROPE RIGHT NOW -- AN' YOU'D BE *MISSIN' THIS!*

WHO CARES ABOUT THE WAR IN EUROPE ANY-MORE? WE GOT OUR OWN WAR *RIGHT HERE* --

-- AND THIS TIME *WE'RE* JOHNNY-ON-THE-SPOT!

IT WAS THE FIRST THING I HEARD IN ALL THIS THAT MADE ANY SENSE.

*IT **WAS** LIKE A WAR -- NOT JUST THE BATTLES, BUT THE VERY FACT OF THE MARVELS THEM-SELVES. A WAR -- OR SOME **FREAKISH, VIOLENT STORM.***

*AND ALL WE COULD DO -- ALL ANYONE COULD DO -- WAS HOLD FAST AND HOPE TO **RIDE IT OUT.***

IT'S THAT COP -- THAT *DEAN* WOMAN! SHE'S GOTTEN 'EM TO MAKE NICE AT EACH OTHER! I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT!

THEY'RE ACTUALLY *SMILIN'* AT EACH OTHER!

IF THEY SHAKE HANDS, I'M *DEFINITELY* GONNA THROW UP!

JUST LIKE THAT -- IT WAS OVER. AND OF COURSE, THERE WERE NO REPRISALS, NO **PUNISHMENTS.**

NOBODY GOT HURT BUT US. THE **NORMAL** PEOPLE.

AW, **NUTS!** THE TORCH JUST **LET HIM GO,** AFTER ALL HE DID!

THAT AIN'T **FAIR!**

FORGET IT, IGGY. YOU EXPECT A STORM TO PAY FOR THE **DAMAGE** IT CAUSED? A WAR TO CARE WHO GETS **KILLED?**

Huh?!

JUST FORGET IT.

THE NEXT DAY DAWNED LIKE NOTHING HAD HAPPENED AT ALL.

EVERYBODY PUT THEIR BACKS INTO DIGGING OUT. REPAIRING THE DAMAGE. JUST LIKE **ANTS.**

AND WE ALL GRUMBLED. AND WE ALL SAID SOMETHING OUGHT TO BE **DONE.** BUT WHAT WAS THERE TO **DO?**

WHAT WAS THERE FOR A **MAN** TO DO -- ?

THIS IS **MISTER COMPTON,** PHIL. HE WAS IN THE EL WHEN IT WENT DOWN.

SOME **RIDE,** YOU BET! WHOOEEE!!

I FOUND DORIS AT A MAKE-SHIFT CLINIC ON THE EAST SIDE...

Um... DORIS -- CAN YOU SPARE A MINUTE?

WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY -- WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING FOR MONTHS -- IT'LL BLOW OVER. IT CAN'T KEEP ON **FOREVER.**

BUT UNTIL -- UNTIL THINGS ARE **SANE** AGAIN, WELL -- A MAN'S **NOTHING** NEXT TO THOSE THINGS --

PHIL -- WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

MAYBE -- WE SHOULD PUT OUR WEDDING PLANS *OFF* FOR A LITTLE WHILE. JUST --

-- JUST UNTIL THIS IS *ALL OVER.*

I DON'T WANT A SUPERMAN, DARLING. I JUST --

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. A MAN --

-- A MAN'S GOT TO BE ABLE TO *PROTECT* HIS FAMILY. IF HE CAN'T DO THAT --

-- HE'S GOT NO BUSINESS BEING A *HUSBAND.*

IF THAT'S HOW YOU *FEEL,* PHIL --

-- YOU'D BETTER HAVE THIS BACK. I WOULDN'T WANT TO BURDEN YOU.

DORIS -- I --

IF YOU EVER WANT TO GIVE IT BACK. YOU KNOW WHERE TO *FIND* ME.

WHEN THIS IS OVER, I'D SAID. WHEN WOULD THAT BE?

IT WOULD BLOW OVER. THE WORLD WOULDN'T STAY LIKE THIS. IT COULDN'T.

COULD IT?

FALL TURNED TO WINTER AND FORTY TO FORTY-ONE AND NOTHING CHANGED. EVERYTHING WAS IN TURMOIL. EVERYWHERE.

SO -- ?

I *WANT* TO CALL HER. I STARED AT THE TELEPHONE FOR TWO HOURS LAST NIGHT. *BUT* --

YOU'RE AN *IMBECILE*, PHIL.

THINGS CHANGED. BUT NOT THE WAY ANYONE EXPECTED --

BUT I *ALWAYS* HAVE TO BE THE NAZIS! I DON'T *WANNA!*

TAKE A LISTEN, PHIL...

I WANNA BE *CAP'N AMERICA!*

OKAY -- THEN I'M A *RATZI DIVE-BOMBER* AN' I'M DROPPIN' MY BOMBS *ALL OVER* YA!

LIFE

DON'T BE *STOOPID*, MAXIE! BOMBS DON'T MEAN *NOTHIN'* TO CAP'N AMERICA!

LOOKIT *THIS!*

HE'S THE *BEST!* HE'D JUMP ONTA YA, RIP OFF YER *CANOPY* -- AN' STUFF THEM BOMBS DOWN YER *NAZI THROAT!*

NOTHIN' STOPS HIM!

A *TANK?* HE'D KICK IT ONTA ITS BACK LIKE A TURTLE! A *PLATOON?* SCATTERED LIKE DUCKPINS!

HE'S *CAP'N AMERICA*, MAXIE! HE'S THE *BEST!*

CAPTAIN AMERICA

LIKE THE ROCKET'S RED GLARE, A MYSTERIOUS PATRIOTIC SENSATION BURSTS ONTO THE SCENE

As the shattering madness of World War II threatens to overwhelm us all with its fury, hostile agents, living among us as unseen as termites in the woodworks, have fought an undeclared war from within, attempting to paralyze our vital defense industries. Courageous federal agents have opposed these saboteurs at every turn, but it is difficult to catch men who strike without warning and then melt back into

merica gained a new weapon in the struggle for democracy -- a mysterious figure known as Captain America, who operates outside the law, answering to no one but himself and his own conscience. Known only to a few trusted associates in the United States government, the man behind the mask remains a mystery to the nation's eager queries. Life

of this star-spangled dynamo.

SECRET ANTI-MILITARY CONSPIRACY IS A SECRET NO LO

ARTIST'S CONCEPTION

CA AND BUCKY TAKE BROADWAY BY STORM

FLAG-DRAPED MYSTERY MAN PACKS A WALL

t, May 8, ten enemies of liberty chuckled mselves in an apparently-deserted nd why shouldn't they? Hadn't they urity of Camp Lehigh to murder e of our nation's most respected they struck a successful terror-blow generals? Hadn't they served their ruthless foreig against freedom? Hadn't they masters well?

Seconds later, the laughs died in their throats as th stronghold was breached by a bold figure in red-white- blue – Captain America. Accompanied only by his laug young daredevil partner, Bucky, America's newest gave this gang of traitors and spies a taste of the r fury. In short order, all ten lay unconscious in the r strewn corners of the room. A good right arm and a hono matched itself against ten Lugers and M and the winner.

HE HIT LIKE A *BLITZKRIEG.*

from? How does he do the questi me? These are on have about this citizens of the his country's cause his bed gladiator w But while the questions are many, the a

YOU COULDN'T GO *ANYWHERE* WITHOUT HEARING ABOUT HIM.

-- SECRET WEAPON --

-- ON GOOD AUTHORITY, A SHOOTING STAR --

-- FELLA TOLD ME THE GOVERNOR --

-- WHOLE SQUAD OF 'EM --

*NOBODY ADMITTED TO KNOWING ANYTHING AT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY -- BUT THEY WERE SURE SMUG ABOUT *SOMETHING*.*

AND THE HEADLINES --

Boston Globe
CAPTAIN AMERICA NABS SPY!

DAILY STAR
CAPTAIN AMERICA PREVENTS DAM EXPLOSION
7 BILLION AID IS SET FOR PI
Few Senators Will Oppose It
Anti-Nazi Rallies Sweep Yugoslavia

The New York Times.
CAPTAIN AMERICA NATION'S No. 1 SPY BUSTER
Nazis Attack Anglo-Greek Flank At Florina
Ford Strike Ends
Stock Market 'Haz' Burned by Torch

Daily Bugle
WHO IS CAPTAIN AMERICA?

*I KNEW THE GUYS WHO WROTE THE STORIES, AND I *STILL* HAD TROUBLE BELIEVING 'EM.*

*THE *NAZI SABOTEURS --*

*-- THE *ASSASSINATION RINGS --*

*-- THE *FIFTH COLUMNISTS --*

EVERY DAY IT SEEMED LIKE THERE WAS SOMETHING NEW.

*HE STROLLED OUT OF NAZI STRONGHOLDS LIKE HE WAS WALKING THROUGH THE *PARK* --*

*-- SHRUGGED OFF BULLETS AND *BAYONETS* --*

-- AND WE ATE IT UP LIKE CANDY.

THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA -- HE'LL GIVE THAT HITLER *WHAT FOR!*

DID YOU SEE THOSE PICTURES IN *LIFE MAGAZINE?*

THOSE *SHOULDERS!*

THOSE *EYES* !!!

HE'S DOIN' WHAT *WE* OUGHTTA BE DOIN' -- TAKIN' THE FIGHT TO THE MAN WHO *STARTED* IT!

I CAN'T WAIT TILL WE'RE *IN* THIS! YOU'LL SEE SOME STUFF *THEN!*

AN' *MA FURY'S BOY'LL* BE LEADIN' THE CHARGE, Eh?-- CAPTAIN HELL'S KITCHEN!

MAYBE YOU CAN BE HIS *KID PARTNER* IF BUCKY CATCHES CHICKEN POX! NICKY, THE KID SCRAPPER!

SHADDAP ALLA YA'S, BEFORE I *POP* YA ONE!

*AND THE MOST AMAZING THING WAS THIS: NO ONE WAS **SCARED** OF HIM.*

*HE WAS AS MUCH A MARVEL AS THE TORCH OR THE SUB-MARINER -- BUT HE WAS NEVER A **THREAT** LIKE THEY WERE.*

*WAS IT BECAUSE THEY WERE **OUTSIDERS**, AND HE WAS ONE OF US? OUR OWN PERSONAL, **AMERICAN** CHAMPION?*

WHATEVER IT WAS, IT WAS *CATCHING* -- AS WE FOUND OUT A FEW WEEKS LATER...

"ANDY HARDY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY"

"THE LADY EVE"
"MY SISTER EILEEN"

Uh -- HI, DORIS...

YOU -- KNOW *BILL LUMPKIN*, DON'T YOU?

Uh -- I'M NOT SURE --

WE'VE *MET* -- BUT I'M SURE YOU WOULDN'T REMEMBER ME.

NICE TO SEE YOU *AGAIN*, THEN -- I GUESS.

I DON'T GET IT, PHIL. ISN'T THAT *YOUR* GIRL -- ?

SHH!

ENJOY THE MOVIE!

THE SHOW WAS A PRETTY GOOD ONE. THEY HAD A "SILLY SYMPHONY," AND A FOLLOW-THE-BOUNCING-BALL SINGALONG --

AND THEN THEY SHOWED THE NEWSREEL.

THE MARCH OF NEWS

-- DRAMATIC FOOTAGE CAPTURED FROM THE VAULTS OF THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND BY BRITISH AGENTS --

-- SHOWING A STUNNING VICTORY FOR THE FORCES OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE --

-- AS THE *INCREDIBLE HUMAN TORCH* AND THE *INDEFATIGABLE SUB-MARINER* ROLL OVER THE *NAZI-JAP WAR MACHINE!*

IT SEEMS THE *AMAZING ACES OF FIRE* AND *WATER* UNCOVERED A JOINT EFFORT BY THE GERMANS AND JAPS TO BURROW AN *INVASION TUNNEL* UNDER THE BERING STRAIT TO ALASKA --

-- AND WEREN'T THOSE *MILITARY MOUNTEBANKS* SURPRISED WHEN A COUPLE OF *UNANNOUNCED GUESTS* DROPPED IN FOR A *VISIT!*

THE JAP-A-NAZIS HAD *GUNS, TANKS, POISON GAS* --

YOU NEVER SAW A THEATER FALL SO *SILENT* SO FAST.

-- BUT DID THE *HUMAN TORCH* CARE?

NO, SIR -- HE *DID NOT!*

AND AS FOR THE *SUB-MARINER* --

-- WELL, HE CLEARLY BELIEVES IN THE OLD ADAGE THAT *ACTIONS* SPEAK LOUDER THAN *WORDS!*

AND WHEN IT WAS OVER --

GO, TORCH!

HIT THOSE NAZI RATS!

SMASH 'EM!

SINK 'EM!

SUB-MARINER! WHAT A GUY!

WHAT A COMBO!

THE HUMAN TORCH AND THE SUB-MARINER HAD FOUGHT AGAINST THE WARMONGERS BEFORE. BUT NEVER SO PUBLICLY, NEVER SO SPECTACULARLY --

-- AND NEVER TOGETHER.

AND IF IT STRUCK ME AS ODD, AT THE TIME, TO APPLAUD TWO MEN WHO'D CAUSED SO MUCH DESTRUCTION SO RECENTLY --

-- I WAS TOO BUSY CHEERING TO NOTICE.

OVERNIGHT, WE ADOPTED THE MARVELS AS "OUR BOYS" -- AND WE WEREN'T SHY ABOUT IT.

GIVE 'EM HELL TORCH!

HE USED TO LIVE RIGHT AROUND HERE, THEY SAY.

AND HE SAVED MY BUSINESS FROM A GASOLINE SYNDICATE, SURE AS SHOOTIN'!

CATCH THAT NAMOR! SAYS HERE HE BROKE UP A PRISONER-OF-WAR ESCAPE UP IN CANADA!

GUESS HE SHOWED THOSE BOYS WHO'S BOSS!

Ahh -- HE AIN'T A PATCH ON THE TORCH!

YOU HEAR HOW HE NABBED THAT ARSONIST?

FIDELITY McPUNK

THE WORLD HAD SHIFTED AGAIN. THE DARK, MENACING SHADOWS HAD BEEN LIT UP --

-- AND TURNED OUT NOT TO BE MONSTERS AFTER ALL.

I'M GLAD YOU AGREED TO SEE ME, DORIS. THAT GUY BILL --

HE'S REALLY JUST OUR *MAILMAN* -- WE MET IN THE LOBBY --

I'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE A FOOL, KIND OF...

NO ARGUMENT FROM *ME*, PHIL.

WELL -- I JUST -- YOU KNOW --

DO YOU THINK WE *COULD* -- ?

GO BACK TO THE WAY THINGS *WERE?* --

-- I DON'T THINK SO. I'M STILL SORT OF MAD AT YOU.

BUT IF YOU WANT TO *START OVER* --

-- I THINK THAT COULD BE ARRANGED.

I CAN'T REMEMBER A MORE *GLORIOUS* FALL.

THE AIR WAS CRISP, THE DAYS WERE BRIGHT AND FRESH AND THE WORLD WAS FULL OF WONDERS.

I WAS THINKING OF THE LITTLE HOUSE AND THE PICKET FENCE, AND THE ONLY MARVELS I CARED TO THINK ABOUT WERE *DORIS'S EYES* --

AND THERE WAS NO DANGER. NOTHING THAT COULDN'T BE SAFELY IGNORED.

SO IT WAS AS MUCH OF A SHOCK TO ME AS TO EVERYONE ELSE --

-- WHEN --

STOP THE MUSIC, PLEASE.

IF I COULD HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION?

I'VE BEEN ASKED TO TELL YOU -- THE ***SUB-MARINER*** HAS APPARENTLY LAUNCHED A ***MILITARY ATTACK*** ON ALL OF CIVILIZATION.

HE'S BEEN REPORTED BATTLING BOTH ***BRITISH*** AND ***ITALIAN*** FORCES IN SPAIN. AND IS CURRENTLY IN POSSESSION OF GIBRALTAR. THE HUMAN TORCH LED A BRITISH ***COUNTER-ATTACK*** --

-- BUT HE HAS NOT BEEN HEARD FROM IN MANY HOURS.

IT IS CONSIDERED UNLIKELY THAT THE SUB-MARINER'S FORCES WILL REACH THE UNITED STATES. BUT NEVERTHELESS, WATERTIGHT SHELTERS ARE BEING PREPARED IN THE SUBWAY TUNNELS.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE POSTED IN ALL PUBLIC PLACES.

*EVERY SENTENCE WAS A THUNDERBOLT. IT JUST -- IT DIDN'T MAKE ANY **SENSE.***

*THE SUB-MARINER WAS ONE OF "OUR BOYS." **WASN'T** HE?*

HOW -- HOW CAN THIS BE HAPPENING?

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!

THIS MUST HAVE BEEN WHAT LONDONERS FELT LIKE DURING THE *BLITZ.* THEY FELT SO *SAFE,* ON THEIR SIDE OF THE CHANNEL -- AND THEN --

-- THEN THE CHANNEL DIDN'T *MEAN ANYTHING* ANYMORE.

WE LISTENED FOR *INSTRUCTIONS* -- FOR EVACUATION PLANS --

AND WE LISTENED AS THE SUB-MARINER WAS REPORTED TO BE ATTACKING IN *AFRICA* --

-- BERLIN --

-- CANADA --

AOOOGAH

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! THIS IS NOT A DRILL!

THE SUB-MARINER IS HEADED FOR NEW YORK!

THIS IS NOT A DRILL!

PLEASE PROCEED TO YOUR NEAREST SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!

AOOOGAH

PHIL -- ?

I KNEW WHAT SHE WAS THINKING.

I'D SAID IT *BEFORE.* "A MAN'S GOT TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY."

"IF HE CAN'T DO THAT --"

YOU'D BETTER GET TO THE SHELTER, HONEY.

BUT -- WHAT ABOUT --

I'VE GOT A *JOB* TO DO.

PHIL! GOT YOUR CAMERA?

IT'S RIVETED ON! THEY SAID SOUTH ON THE RADIO!

THE BATTERY! COME ON!

GET TO THE SHELTERS, BOTH OF --

PRESS!

THE TORCH IS ON THE WAY! WE JUST HEARD -- !

IN HERE!

IF WE CAN MAKE IT TO THE ROOF --

I'M STAYING *HERE*. I'VE GOT A CLEAR VIEW. AND THE GRATE OUGHT TO *HOLD* --

NOT *ME!*

I'M *THROUGH HIDING* FROM IT!

I REACHED THE ROOF, JUST AS --

HERE IT COMES!!

IT WAS SOMETHING TO *SEE.*

WE HEARD LATER ABOUT HOW HE USED WHALES AND SUPER-TURBINES TO GENERATE THE WAVE, BUT AT THE MOMENT IT HIT --

-- IT WAS NATURE UNLEASHED, PURE AND SIMPLE.

NAMOR!

IT WAS AS IF EVERY-THING THAT HAD BEEN BREWING SINCE WE FIRST SAW THE TORCH BURST INTO FLAME HAD BROKEN IN ONE COLOSSAL STORM --

THIS STOPS NOW!

YOU WON'T FIND IT EASY, FIREBUG!

-- AND I WAS AT ITS EYE.

I WAS A PART OF IT. I WAS RIGHT WHERE I BELONGED.

I WAS THE *WITNESS.*

A CHUNK OF *MASONRY,* THE DOCTORS TOLD ME.

BROKEN LOOSE DURING THE FIGHT -- BY ONE OR BOTH OF THEM --

-- MARKING ME FOR *ALL TIME.*

BY THE TIME I WOKE UP, IT WAS **ALL OVER** -- IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

REPARATIONS WERE BEING MADE, AND THE SUB-MARINER WAS ON THE SIDE OF THE **ANGELS** AGAIN.

BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, JAPAN HAD ATTACKED **PEARL HARBOR**, WE WERE AT WAR WITH THE AXIS POWERS, AND NOBODY HAD THE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE MARVELS ANYMORE.

PHIL? THEY SAID YOU WERE --

HIYA, SWEETHEART. THESE FLOWERS ALL FROM YOU?

NOPE -- THEY'RE FROM HER.

OH, PHIL!

YOUR EYE -- THE DOCTORS SAID --

Um -- HOW DO YOU -- ?

HOW DO I FEEL?

YOU MEAN, ASIDE FROM WONDERING WHETHER MONOCULAR VISION WILL IMPROVE MY PHOTOGRAPHY?

AM I MAD AT THE *MARVELS* FOR TAKING MY EYE? AM I GOING TO SWEAR VENGEANCE ON THEM --

-- DEVOTE MY LIFE TO *DESTROYING THEM ALL* OR DRIVING THEM OUT OF OUR WORLD SO EVERYTHING CAN BE THE WAY IT *WAS* AGAIN?

IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE ASKING?

Um -- SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

NAH.

I'M GOING TO HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO. THERE'S A *WAR ON*, FOR ONE.

AND WE'VE GOT A *WEDDING* TO PLAN -- THAT IS, IF YOU'RE WILLING TO MARRY *POPEYE THE CAMERA MAN.*

BUT -- I --

BUT --

-- BUT --

AW, SHUT UP AND *KISS ME*, WOULD YOU?

WELL, *I'D* SAY HE'S RECOVERED.

I WAS 4-F THANKS TO MY EYE. BUT I DID GET TO EUROPE -- AS THE WAR CORRESPONDENT I'D WANTED TO BE AT THE START.

the food here's lousy, but what do you expect? I think it's last year's leftovers from the Bugle lunchroom.

MOVING OUT IN A FEW MINUTES, PHIL.

I'LL BE READY, CASEY.

I've been thinking about what I tried to tell you when I left - about that day and what happened? I think I know how to say it now.

I'd been waiting for the marvels to go away - and what I realized that day - what maybe we all realized.

They weren't some temporary thing like the world's fair or the Olympics, or even the war. They were for real.

The marvels are here to stay. And there's more of them all the time - Citizen V, the Whizzer, the Blue Diamond -

I could wait forever if I wanted, but that would just stop me, not them.

JUST GOT THE WORD. LET'S GO.

And the thing I didn't see until I was up on that building and the wave was crashing around me -

It isn't going to be them that adapts to us.

The world is different now. The rules have changed.

DOWN THERE. SEE 'EM?

THAT'S A LOT OF *GERMANS*...

Forever.

And nobody has any idea what the future's going to bring.

YEAH -- *BUT LOOK WHAT'S COMING!*

But do you know what?

It's going to be one heck of a ride, finding out!

Your loving husband, Phil

End of Book One

ZONE